

**Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development**  
**Approved Minutes**  
**December 10 & 11, 2015**  
**Anchorage, AK**

*Thursday, December 10*

Chair Fields called the meeting to order at 8 a.m. All members were present. The meeting began with a prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance. Because they serve on local school boards, John Harmon, Chair Fields, and Sue Hull declared a potential conflict of interest with the agenda topic regarding the use of school funds to influence elections. Chair Fields ruled there was no conflict of interest.

**Public Comment**

Tracey Wiese, past president of the Alaska Nurse Practitioner Association, supported the proposed regulation regarding fetal alcohol spectrum disorder.

Jennifer Hall Jones, of the Alaska branch of the International Dyslexia Association, asked the board to define dyslexia in regulation and allow its use in individual educational programs and to determine eligibility for special education.

Bonnie Friedman, of the Decoding Dyslexia organization, said Alaska's teachers must teach reading adequately and know how to identify students' problems with reading.

Posie Boggs of the Literate Nation Alaska Coalition said dyslexia should be defined in regulation. Teacher preparation in reading instruction is weak.

Tommy O'Malley supported the proposed regulation regarding fetal alcohol spectrum disorder.

William Green, of the NAACP's education committee, expressed concern that Alaska's children can't read well. He asked what the NAACP can do to help. He asked who is accountable for children who have problems with reading.

David Nees said that the Alaska Public Offices Commission said the board's regulation on elections complements the commission's regulations.

Christie Reinhardt, of the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education, supported the proposed regulation regarding fetal alcohol spectrum disorder.

David Boyle opposed the repeal of the board's elections regulation.

Mike Bronson, an NAACP volunteer, opposed the proposed repeal of the early literacy screening regulation. He said the mandate should remain but be contingent on state funding. He called for more reading instruction in the schools.

Marilyn Pierce-Bulger said there is a high demand for diagnostic services for fetal alcohol spectrum disorder.

Lisa Parady, executive director of the Alaska Council of School Administrators and the Alaska Superintendents Association, said a superintendents' regulation-writing committee has submitted written comments. She said it was good to have an infrastructure in which the department and superintendents work together on accountability and school support systems. She thanked the board for its interest in a resolution supporting repeal of the requirement that school districts spend at least 70 percent of their operating funds on instruction. She said she was uncertain about how much money would be saved by altering the school funding formula for small schools.

Janet Donnelly, a retired teacher, said there is a lack of teacher preparation in teaching reading.

Laura Hilton wants repeal of the requirement that school districts spend at least 70 percent of their operating funds on instruction, and supports maintaining the funding formula for small schools.

Rick Smith, a retired teacher, expressed concern about the Common Core State Standards and the Alaska Measures of Progress assessment. He said testing takes a lot of time. He feels the test questions are slanted toward government-approved ideas. He said Alaska has adopted the Common Core but under its own name to cover its tracks. He asked the board to not repeal its elections regulation.

Jeanne Gehrhardt, a member of the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education, supported early supports for children with disabilities and the board's proposed regulation regarding fetal alcohol spectrum disorder.

Norm Wooten supported no change to the funding formula for small schools and repeal of the requirement that school districts spend at least 70 percent of their operating funds on instruction.

Rep. Lora Reinbold said the legislature has the authority to direct education and cited a statute that doesn't allow districts to expend funds on the Common Core. She said the board's strategic plan must be approved by the legislature. She said the state should not force students to take the SAT or ACT tests. She supported the requirement that school districts spend at least 70 percent of their operating funds on instruction. She opposed repeal of the board's elections regulation. She said the board should focus on grades kindergarten to 12, not pre-kindergarten.

Stuart Krueger read a letter from Rep. Shelley Hughes opposing repeal of the board's elections regulation.

David Piazza, superintendent of the Southwest Region School District, supported repeal of the requirement that school districts spend at least 70 percent of their operating funds on instruction.

Kevin Shipley, superintendent of the Kake School District, supported repeal of the requirement that school districts spend at least 70 percent of their operating funds on instruction.

Dr. PJ Ford-Slack, part-time superintendent of the Hoonah School District, supported repeal of the requirement that school districts spend at least 70 percent of their operating funds on instruction.

Stewart McDonald, superintendent of the Kodiak Island Borough School District, supported repeal of the requirement that school districts spend at least 70 percent of their operating funds on instruction. He supported the current school funding formula for small schools.

Cheryl Schweigert, director of Special Programs at the Northwest Arctic Borough School District, said fetal alcohol spectrum disorder was not intended as a clinical diagnosis. She also opposed teacher trainings mandated by House Bill 44.

Sen. Mike Dunleavy opposed repeal of the board's elections regulation. He said the state statute on the topic should be reviewed and changed so that public funds can't be used for what some might perceive as politicking.

## **Work Session**

### **Agenda Item 1. Discussion of the Alaska Measures of Progress (AMP).**

Commissioner Hanley said superintendents are not satisfied with the usefulness of AMP's parent reports. The questions are: how do we fix this; can't we just use the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP); and can the SAT and ACT serve as the high school-level test.

Brian Gong, executive director of the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment, said summative assessments, such as AMP, give general information about student achievement in the state's standards at the school year's end. It is teachers who give formative assessments. His criteria for judging the quality of summative assessments are: do they align with state standards; are they fair; do they allow for comparisons across contexts; do they incorporate the state's achievement levels precisely; are they transparent and receive oversight. He said Alaska's process of setting its achievement level scores was state of the art.

Mr. Gong said interim and formative assessments do not need to be standardized. But formative assessments are not useful for establishing strong claims about comparisons across contexts. The parent reports of summative assessments should be produced quickly, be easy to understand, be accurate, and have the right information. To provide more specific information about standards, such as student achievement regarding fractions, would require a very long test. There would have to be 50 questions on fractions alone.

Mr. Gong said it is better to use interim and formative assessments to provide information about student achievement in specific standards. In answer to a question, he said adaptive assessments provide more precise information about all students.

In answer to a question, Mr. Gong said AMP is strong in the five criteria he cited above, but there were glitches in the reporting. Alaska needs to recover the confidence of stakeholders and be specific about what they lack confidence about.

In answer to a question, Mr. Gong said states are leaving the two national assessment consortia because of cost and politics related to the Common Core. The large-population states don't feel they need the national assessment. States can compare themselves by looking at data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

In answer to a question, Mr. Gong said Alaska's standards are high and it will take time for schools to align instruction to the standards.

Sue Hull said the issues about AMP are: credibility, were the contract's deliverables met, and what is the best path forward.

In answer to a question, Mr. Gong said the new version of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Every Student Succeeds ACT, maintains the same assessment requirements as No Child Left Behind and states must have standards aligned to career and college ready standards. He said Alaska is in a good position to meet that requirement.

Sue Hull moved and John Harmon seconded a motion to go into executive session to discuss the state's contract with the Achievement & Assessment Institute, which is the vendor for AMP. The motion carried unanimously.

At 11:45 a.m. Sue Hull moved to come out of executive session.

Commissioner Hanley said the department needs to understand how AMP impacts schools. The department and the Achievement & Assessment Institute will engage with superintendents and local school boards in January.

Sue Hull said the topics should be: usefulness of data, delays in receiving data, the AMP system as a whole when it is fully implemented, and the comparability of AMP results with the nation.

## **Agenda Item 2. History of loan forgiveness**

Diane Barrans, executive director of the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education, reviewed a PowerPoint presentation of programs that forgave part of the college loans held by prospective teachers. She also referred the board to a report from March 2014 that is on the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education's website. In general, such programs have a high default rate and serve few people.

## **Agenda Item 5. Early Childhood Education Core Knowledge and Comprehension.**

As a courtesy to the presenters, the board took this agenda item out of order. Panu Lucier, director of the System for Early Education Development (SEED), and Kerry Reardon, of SEED's professional development committee, reviewed documents about the early education career ladder and core knowledge and competencies. They asked the board to consider endorsing SEED's document titled *Alaska's Early Care and Learning Core Knowledge and Competencies*.

### **Agenda Item 6A. Rilke Schule Charter School.**

School organizers reviewed the school's history and spoke of plans to move into a single building. Board members praised the school for its achievements. Kathleen Yarr asked about the number of economically disadvantaged students and Alaska Native students. School organizers said they follow the Anchorage School District's lottery process and do not recruit students.

### **Agenda Item 6B. STrEaM Charter School.**

Dr. Susan McCauley, director of Teaching & Learning Support, reviewed the history of the school's application for a charter, which was delayed last year by not having a facility. School organizers said the school now has a facility. The school will declare boundaries with Bartlett High School and West High School, which allows it to give first draw to students within those boundaries.

### **Agenda Item 3. Alternatives to Certification.**

Sondra Meredith, administrator of Teacher Certification, reviewed the requirements for Alaska's regular teaching certificate and for alternate routes to certification.

Sue Hull said that a retired teacher with a lifetime certificate cannot, by regulation, serve as a long-term substitute teacher. She asked the board to review the regulation for possible amendment.

### **Agenda Item 7. Extension of UAF School of Education's Board Approval.**

Sondra Meredith, administrator of Teacher Certification, reviewed the University of Alaska Fairbanks School of Education's request to the board to extend its approval as a teacher preparation program.

### **Agenda Item 8. Student Advisor Selection.**

Barbara Thompson moved and John Harmon seconded a motion for the board to meet in executive session to interview candidates for the student-elect. The motion carried unanimously.

Sue Hull moved and Barbara Thompson seconded a motion to come out of executive session. The board named Wilfried Zibell of Norvik as student-elect.

### **Agenda Item 9. Commissioner Evaluation.**

Sue Hull moved and John Harmon seconded a motion for the board to meet in executive session to evaluate Commissioner Hanley.

The board adjourned at 6 p.m.

*Friday, December 11*

**Work Session continued**

Sue Hull moved to pull items 20C, D, E, and F from the consent agenda and place them as agenda items 14B, C, D, and E. John Harmon seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

**Agenda Item 10A. Arts Standards.**

As a courtesy to the presenters, the board took Agenda Item 10A out of order.

Shannon Daut, executive director of the Alaska State Council on the Arts, reviewed a report about arts education in Alaska. She said the arts promote creative and critical thinking.

Annie Calkins, a consultant to the arts council, reviewed the proposed arts standards and the process by which arts educators developed them.

**Agenda Item 10B. Report to the Legislature.**

Eric Fry, Information Officer, reviewed a draft report to the legislature and received changes from the board.

**Agenda Item 11A. Use of Funds in Elections.**

Assistant Attorney General Luann Weyhrauch reviewed the proposed repeal of the department's elections regulation. Since the time the board adopted the elections regulation, the legislature passed a statute addressing the issue and gave regulatory responsibility for elections to the Alaska Public Offices Commission, which enforces elections regulations.

Sue Hull said the board should not repeal its elections regulation because the repeal would not remedy the confusion evidenced in public comments.

**Agenda Item 11B. Challenging Courses.**

Marcy Herman, legislative liaison, explained the proposed regulation, which conforms to a recent change in state statute. She also noted that the statute would not prohibit districts from allowing students in grades 7 and 8 to challenge courses.

**Agenda Item 11C. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.**

Commissioner Hanley reviewed the proposed regulation, noting that the department had changed it in response to public comment and after vetting by Dr. Jay Butler, the state's chief medical officer.

In response to a question, Commissioner Hanley said the department could look at adding dyslexia to the list of conditions that may make a student eligible for special education.

**Agenda Item 11D. Early Literacy Screening.**

Commissioner Hanley said the board mandated early literacy screenings in response to the availability of state funding. Now that the funding is no longer available, the department proposes repealing the regulation mandating early literacy screenings.

**Agenda Item 11E. Teacher Certification.**

Sondra Meredith, administrator of Teacher Certification, reviewed the proposed regulations and answered two questions raised in public comment.

Barbara Thompson said newly mandated trainings for teachers receiving or renewing certification should be addressed in teacher preparation programs.

Sue Hull asked about the department's process for answering questions raised in public comment. Ms. Meredith said the department has a process for answering questions on its website. Public notices for proposed regulations refer to this process.

Kathleen Yarr said teachers need a course in reading in subjects such as history and science.

**Agenda Item 11F. Participation Guidelines.**

Margaret MacKinnon, director of Assessment & Accountability, explained the regulation. She noted that the document *Participation Guidelines* refers to students in special education and to English language learners. The guidelines were changed last year to account for the Alaska Measures of Progress, and changed this year because the English language proficiency and science assessments will be administered on computers, which affects the allowable accommodations.

Sue Hull and John Harmon said it is important to say in the *Participation Guidelines* that opting-out of an assessment is allowed. Barbara Thompson said participation refers to how students take an assessment, not who takes it.

***Business session***

**Agenda Item 12A. Art Standards.**

John Harmon moved and Kenny Gallahorn seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education & Early Development open a period of public comment for regulation 4 AAC 04.140(a) Arts Standards. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Agenda Item 13A. Use of Funds in Elections.**

There was no motion.

### **Agenda Item 13B. Challenging Courses.**

Barbara Thompson moved and John Harmon seconded the following motion: After considering all public comment, I move the State Board of Education & Early Development adopt the proposed amendments to 4 AAC 06.065 Challenging courses. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Agenda Item 13C. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.**

John Harmon moved and Kathleen Yarr seconded the following motion: After considering all public comment, I move the State Board of Education & Early Development adopt the proposed amendments to regulations 4 AAC 52.130(k) Criteria for determination of eligibility. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Agenda Item 13D. Early Literacy Screenings.**

Kathleen Yarr moved and Barbara Thompson seconded the following motion: After considering all public comment, I move the State Board of Education & Early Development repeal 4 AAC 06.713 Early literacy screening. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Agenda Item 13E. Teacher Certification.**

Barbara Thompson moved and Kenny Gallahorn seconded the following motion: After considering all public comment, I move the State Board of Education & Early Development adopt the proposed amendments to regulations 4 AAC 04.210 Highly qualified teachers, 4 AAC 12.300 Certification of teachers, 4 AAC 12.305 Teacher certificate, 4 AAC 12.307 Acceptance of educator preparation programs, 4 AAC 12.308 Approval of in-state educator preparation programs, 4 AAC 12.310 Designation and qualifying scores of teacher competency examination, 4 AAC 12.315 Teachers holding regular or advanced Type A certificates on September 29, 2005, 4 AAC 12.320 Alaska teacher performance review standards; reconsideration, 4 AAC 12.330 Endorsement requirements for teachers providing special education, 4 AAC 12.345 Administrative certificate (Type B); provisional certificate (provisional Type B), 4 AAC 12.346 Type B limited certificate, 4 AAC 12.347 Special education administrator certificate (Type F); provisional certificate (provisional Type F), 4 AAC 12.355 Special service certificate (Type C); provisional Type C, 4 AAC 12.360 Advanced special services certification (Advanced Type C certification), 4 AAC 12.370 Limited certificate (Type M), 4 AAC 12.372 Limited career or technical education certificate (Type M), 4 AAC 12.375 Limited certificate for instructional aide continuing teacher education program, 4 AAC 12.380 Retired teacher certificate (Type R), 4 AAC 12.390 Early childhood education certificate (Type E), 4 AAC 12.395 Teacher endorsements, 4 AAC 12.396 Addition or removal of endorsements, 4 AAC 12.397 Mandating training requirements, 4 AAC 12.400 Emergency special services certificate (emergency Type



C), 4 AAC 12.405 Renewal of certificates, 4 AAC 12.407 Content area examinations), and 4 AAC 12.900 Definitions. The motion passed 6 to 0, with John Harmon abstaining.

**Agenda Item 13F. Participation Guidelines.**

Kenny Gallahorn moved and Barbara Thompson seconded the following motion: After considering all public comment, I move the State Board of Education & Early Development adopt the proposed amendments to 4 AAC 06.775 Statewide assessment program for students with disabilities. The motion passed unanimously.

**Agenda Item 14A. March Dates.**

The board set March 21-22 as the dates of its March meeting in Juneau.

**Agenda Item 14B. Resolution Regarding District Cooperation.**

Sue Hull moved and Barbara Thompson seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education & Early Development approve the proposed resolution encouraging cooperative agreements among school districts. The motion passed 6-0 with John Harmon abstaining.

**Agenda Item 14C. Minimum Expenditure for Instruction.**

John Harmon moved and Sue Hull seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education & Early Development approve the proposed resolution supporting the repeal of the statutory requirement under AS 14.17.520, Minimum Expenditure for Instruction that requires districts to spend a minimum of 70 percent of their operating fund on instruction, in acknowledgment that a system of accountability directly tied to student achievement is now in place. The motion passed unanimously.

**Agenda Item 14D. Minimum Student Count.**

Dr. Keith Hamilton moved and Kenny Gallahorn seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education & Early Development approve the proposed resolution requesting the Alaska Legislature to not change the minimum student count in the school funding formula.

To amend the main motion, Kenny Gallahorn moved and Kathleen Yarr seconded a motion to remove the phrase “Alaska Native” from the resolution. The amendment passed unanimously.

To amend the main motion, Barbara Thompson moved and Sue Hull seconded a motion to change the wording in the first “whereas” to read: WHEREAS, the State of Alaska has a constitutional obligation to provide a system of public schools open to all children of the state regardless of where they live. The amendment passed unanimously.

The main motion as amended passed unanimously.

**Agenda Item 14E. Career and College Readiness Assessments.**

There was no motion.

**Agenda Item 15. Libraries, Archives, & Museums Report.**

Commissioner Hanley referred the board to a written report.

**Agenda Item 16. Teaching & Learning Support.**

Commissioner Hanley reviewed the written report.

**Agenda Item 17. Assessment & Accountability.**

Margaret MacKinnon, director of Assessment & Accountability, said parent reports for the Alaska Measures of Progress should arrive in the schools in early December. She reviewed her written report.

In response to a question, Ms. MacKinnon said the department does not give personally identifiable information to the U.S. Department of Education.

Sue Hull said the department should provide information that parents and districts really need, while protecting privacy. During teacher evaluations, principals talk to teachers about student achievement without having a cumbersome system.

**Agenda Item 18. Attorney General's Report.**

Assistant Attorney General Luann Weyhrauch reviewed her written report.

**Agenda Item 19. Commissioner's Report.**

Commissioner Hanley said we are at a point of opportunity to set a new path forward regarding involvement from stakeholders and how the department does its work. The Commissioner reviewed the Governor's budget for the department. He said the department is recruiting for directors of Mt. Edgecumbe High School and the Division of Libraries, Archives & Museums. The Commissioner anticipated there will be working groups with stakeholders about implementing the new federal Every Student Succeeds Act.

Sue Hull said there is a concern about whether the department protects the rights of parents and the interests of children. The department needs to build the public's confidence.

**Agenda Item 20. Consent Agenda.**

Barbara Thompson moved and Sue Hull seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education & Early Development approve the consent agenda consisting of the following: approval of the board's Strategic Plan, approval of an extension of the charter of Rilke Schule Charter School, approval of the charter of Anchorage STrEaM Charter School, approval of

minutes of the September 16-17, 2015, meeting, approval of minutes of the October 9, 2015, meeting, approval of minutes of the October 26, 2015, meeting, and approval of extending the board's approval of the University of Alaska Fairbanks teacher preparation programs. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Board comments.**

Alec Burris thanked the board for the experience of being on the board. He said he looks forward to the board's strategic plan. He approved of the resolutions and regulations passed by the board. He thanked the three applicants for student-elect.

John Harmon said he appreciates the public's comments, he likes the board's strategic plan, and he looks forward to the department's response to the Every Student Succeeds Act.

Kathleen Yarr welcomes the new student-elect, Wilfried Zibell. She said she was proud of the work on the fetal alcohol spectrum disorder regulation and urged the board to press on with dyslexia.

Barbara Thompson reviewed meetings of the Alaska Safe Children's Task Force. She thanked the members of the public for their comments and the Anchorage School District for hosting the board meeting.

LTC Noll thanked the staff, the Anchorage School District, and the public who commented.

Kenny Gallahorn thanked the board and department staff. He said the board should move forward with its strategic plan.

Dr. Keith Hamilton thanked the Anchorage School District. He said the Every Student Succeeds Act and the board's strategic plan are opportunities to grow.

Sue Hull noted that there hasn't been a recent meeting with the University of Alaska regents. She urged the department to look at the regulation that prevents retired teachers from working as long-time substitutes.

Chair Fields said the department must figure out when to move fast and when to slow down. The board is ready and willing to help.

The meeting adjourned at 2 p.m.

